

mittee on Science of House of Representatives by section 1(a) of Pub. L. 104-14, set out as a note preceding section 21 of Title 2, The Congress.

§ 278j. Studies by National Research Council

The Director may periodically contract with the National Research Council for advice and studies to assist the Institute to serve United States industry and science. The subjects of such advice and studies may include—

(1) the competitive position of the United States in key areas of manufacturing and emerging technologies and research activities which would enhance that competitiveness;

(2) potential activities of the Institute, in cooperation with industry and the States, to assist in the transfer and dissemination of new technologies for manufacturing and quality assurance; and

(3) identification and assessment of likely barriers to widespread use of advanced manufacturing technology by the United States workforce, including training and other initiatives which could lead to a higher percentage of manufacturing jobs of United States companies being located within the borders of our country.

(Mar. 3, 1901, ch. 872, § 24, as added Aug. 23, 1988, Pub. L. 100-418, title V, § 5114(2), 102 Stat. 1432.)

§ 278k. Regional Centers for the Transfer of Manufacturing Technology

(a) Creation and support of Centers; affiliations; merit review in determining awards; objectives

The Secretary, through the Director and, if appropriate, through other officials, shall provide assistance for the creation and support of Regional Centers for the Transfer of Manufacturing Technology (hereafter in this chapter referred to as the “Centers”). Such centers¹ shall be affiliated with any United States-based non-profit institution or organization, or group thereof, that applies for and is awarded financial assistance under this section in accordance with the description published by the Secretary in the Federal Register under subsection (c)(2) of this section. Individual awards shall be decided on the basis of merit review. The objective of the Centers is to enhance productivity and technological performance in United States manufacturing through—

(1) the transfer of manufacturing technology and techniques developed at the Institute to Centers and, through them, to manufacturing companies throughout the United States;

(2) the participation of individuals from industry, universities, State governments, other Federal agencies, and, when appropriate, the Institute in cooperative technology transfer activities;

(3) efforts to make new manufacturing technology and processes usable by United States-based small- and medium-sized companies;

(4) the active dissemination of scientific, engineering, technical, and management information about manufacturing to industrial firms, including small- and medium-sized manufacturing companies; and

(5) the utilization, when appropriate, of the expertise and capability that exists in Federal laboratories other than the Institute.

(b) Activities of Centers

The activities of the Centers shall include—

(1) the establishment of automated manufacturing systems and other advanced production technologies, based on research by the Institute, for the purpose of demonstrations and technology transfer;

(2) the active transfer and dissemination of research findings and Center expertise to a wide range of companies and enterprises, particularly small- and medium-sized manufacturers; and

(3) loans, on a selective, short-term basis, of items of advanced manufacturing equipment to small manufacturing firms with less than 100 employees.

(c) Duration and amount of support; program descriptions; applications; merit review; evaluations of assistance; applicability of patent law

(1) The Secretary may provide financial support to any Center created under subsection (a) of this section for a period not to exceed six years. The Secretary may not provide to a Center more than 50 percent of the capital and annual operating and maintenance funds required to create and maintain such Center.

(2) The Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register, within 90 days after August 23, 1988, a draft description of a program for establishing Centers, including—

(A) a description of the program;

(B) procedures to be followed by applicants;

(C) criteria for determining qualified applicants;

(D) criteria, including those listed under paragraph (4), for choosing recipients of financial assistance under this section from among the qualified applicants; and

(E) maximum support levels expected to be available to Centers under the program in the fourth through sixth years of assistance under this section.

The Secretary shall publish a final description under this paragraph after the expiration of a 30-day comment period.

(3) Any nonprofit institution, or group thereof, or consortia of nonprofit institutions, including entities existing on August 23, 1988, may submit to the Secretary an application for financial support under this subsection, in accordance with the procedures established by the Secretary and published in the Federal Register under paragraph (2). In order to receive assistance under this section, an applicant shall provide adequate assurances that it will contribute 50 percent or more of the proposed Center's capital and annual operating and maintenance costs for the first three years and an increasing share for each of the last three years. Each applicant shall also submit a proposal for the allocation of the legal rights associated with any invention which may result from the proposed Center's activities.

(4) The Secretary shall subject each such application to merit review. In making a decision

¹ So in original. Probably should be capitalized.